Low Defeance Expenditure by India

52. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
SHRI O. P. KOHLI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's military expenditure is incredibly low considering the huge frontier the country has to defend; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to increase expenditure on Defence in view of continuing threats from across the border?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) India's defence expenditure is based upon the requirements of adequate and optimun defence preparedness within available financial resources.

(b) The Government is committed to ensuring the security of the country against all threats and eventualities and to locate whatever human and material resources that are required to meet them.

Canadian Charter Flight Strays into Defence Airspace at Mumbai

53. SHRI K. M. SAIFULLAH: DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Canadian Charter flight from Dubai to Delhi strayed into defence airspace at Mumbai in the last week of September;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Commander of the plane who deviated from the flight plan submitted to Air Traffic Control was interrogated; and

(d) the cause of deviation from the prescribed route and action taken against the defaulters?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) On 27.9.1997, a Canadian non scheduled charter aircraft (flight No. 4A/425/9) on a flight from Dubai to Delhi via Bombay deviated from the planned route and flew within 30 kms of Jamnagar. The interceptor aircraft were scrambled from Bhuj and the aircraft was directed to land at Bombay by the Air Force radar unit.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The commander of the flight had stated that he deviated from the approved flight path to follow a shorter route in order to save fuel. A thorough search of aircraft was carried out but nothing incriminating could be found. The aircraft was cleared to proceed further.

Increase in incidents of Border Firing

54. SHRI GHUERAN AZAM: DR. MOHAN BABU:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the border firing incidents have increased since the past few months;

(b) if so, the details of border firing held on Indo-Pak border during the last six months together with the number of casualties and whether Indian forces have given befitting reply;

(c) whether the persons living in the border areas have suffered a lot, and

(d) if so, the reasons for border firing and the compensation paid by Government to the jawans killed/injured and also to the civilians residing in border villages?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) There was an increase in firings on Indo-Pak LOC/International Border during August and September, 1997;

(b) A statement showing details of firing and casualty at the Indo-Pak border in J & K during the last six months is appended *(See* below.) Army has been responding to unprovoked Pakistani firing at appropriate time and place, taking due care that the situation remains localised, there are no civilian casualties, our

casualties are minimum and at the same time it proves punitive and effective in nature.

(a) At times, such firing incidents do affect the normal life of the people living in border areas.

(b) Pakistani forces resort to unprovoked firing in order to aid and abet infiltration of foreign militants and smuggling of arms and ammunition into J & K with the over all aim of perpetuating militancy in the state and keeping the Kashmir issue live.

There are adequate provisions in the Liberalised Pension Scheme for Armed Forces personnel in order to compensate for the casualty suffered by them due to firing at the border. In order to alleviate the sufferings of civilian population in the Kargil sector due to Pakistani firing in September 1997, relief has been sanctioned from Prime Minister's Relief Fund in addition to the relief sanctioned by the State Government.

Statement

Petails of Firing and Casualty at the Indo-Pak Border during May to October 1997

Sector	No. of	Army		BSF		*Civilians*	
		K	W	K	W	K	XV
Siachen Glacier	171	2	21	—	3	24	35
LOC	1618	11	44	—	4	8	15
IB	147		11				
Total	1936	13	76	—	7	32	50

K : Kiled
W : Wounded
LOC : Line of Control
IB : International Border

Supply of Bullet Proof Jackets to jawans

55. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': SHRI AKHILESH DAS:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(b) whether it is a fact that Army's demand for purchase of bullet proof jackets for soldiers employed in Jammu and North-East has been pending for the last two years;

(c) whether it is also a fact that soldiers are being killed in insurgency affected areas in the country due to non-supply of bullet proof Jackets to them;

(a) if so, the number of those killed on that account during the last two years; and

(b) the reasons for non-supply of such Jackets to jawans?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) No, Sir. A proposal for purchase of Bullet-proof jackets was received in June, 1997. Procurement of Jackets is being made on emergent basis.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. No such inference can possibly be drawn.

(d) The Army is equipped with Bullet-proof jackets and its procurement is a recurring feature.